

02-277

December 11, 2002

Michael Powell, FCC Chair
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th ~~Street~~ SW
Washington, DC 20554

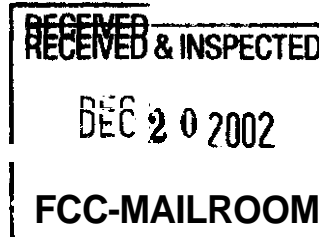
RE: PROTECT MEDIA DEMOCRACY

To Chairman Powell:

Confirmed

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Distribution



America's airwaves belong to the American people, and ~~the~~ FCC is mandated to manage them in the public interest. Independent, critical and genuinely representative media are crucial to a healthy democracy. Without them, citizens lose the **means** to control and participate in the public debate that sets the nation's political agenda. ~~In~~ the absence of an effective regulatory agency, corporate **control** of the media damages our democracy.

I want the FCC to protect ~~the~~ public interest by maintaining:

- The newspaperibroadcast cross-ownership rule to continue to prevent **owners** of a broadcast station **from owning** daily newspapers in ~~the~~ same market.
- A national broadcast ownership cap to prevent one company from owning broadcast stations that reach more than **35%** of U.S. households.
- The local radio ownership rule to cap the number of radio stations a company can own in a single listening area to eight or less, depending **on** size.
- Duopoly rule to limit a company to owning two broadcast TV stations in a given market.
- Dual network rule to ~~bar~~ the major TV networks from merging with each other.

Chain ownership of newspapers, TV and radio ~~stations~~ would likely increase dramatically with media deregulation, resulting in a drop in news quality. ~~As~~ it is, dissenting political viewpoints are routinely marginalized in national mainstream media. The ~~interests~~ and perspectives of minorities, immigrants, women and others **are** under represented. We **need** more public affairs **programs** and local broadcasts that **only** smaller, niche and regional media outlets can provide.

I urge you to make **a stand** for democracy, to preserve and strengthen the rules that limit media consolidation and promote public access to media in your Biennial Review.

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